



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:

Friday, October 20, 2000

FLU SHOT UPDATE

Monroe County health officials today announced that the nationwide delay in the availability of flu vaccine may necessitate postponing public flu clinics in various locations in Monroe County until mid-late November. A final decision on whether to postpone clinics scheduled for the first week of November will be made by October 27, 2000.

- When flu vaccine becomes available, individuals in high-risk groups will be immunized first. Lower-risk, otherwise healthy people, will be immunized later in the season.
- Current reports indicate that adequate amounts of vaccine will be produced this year. The most recent projections call for the receipt of approximately 75% of the total amount of vaccine by the end of November. The remaining 25% of vaccine is expected by the end of December. Flu shots are beneficial well into the winter (December and beyond).
- Data gathered over the past 18 years indicates that the flu generally peaks between December-March. Flu has peaked over the past 18 years as follows: four times in December, four times in January, seven times in February and three times in March.
- An extensive networking system has been established to quickly identify outbreaks of flu in Monroe County. Schools, nursing homes, laboratories and large businesses will communicate regularly with local health officials.
- Health officials recommend that people ill with respiratory symptoms avoid places such as the workplace, hospitals and nursing homes to prevent exposing others. Thorough and frequent hand washing during flu season is strongly recommended.
- Flu is a respiratory illness that is spread easily from person to person. Symptoms include rapid onset of fever, sore throat, muscle aches, chills and headache. Approximately 20,000 people die from flu or its complications each year in the United States.

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- Residents may call a recorded information line for the locations of flu shot clinics and other flu-related information. The number is: **274-6189**.

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*For More Information, contact:
Communications and Special Events at 428-2380, or
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